

Welcome Back Reopening & Safety Guide



Fall 2021 will be an exciting time of year as AACPS moves forward for the return of students to schools. This guide is a compilation of best practices, information, and requirements that address the in-person learning environment, including protocols that will be enforced to keep students, staff, and visitors as safe as possible.

This guide provides information, protocols, recommendations, and requirements related to COVID-19 and in-person learning in schools in an effort to continue to provide a healthy and safe environment for students, staff, AACPS families, visitors, and extended community. The guidelines and protocols found within include best practices and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Maryland Department of Health, Anne Arundel County Department of Health, as well as current state and local mandates.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools had discussions with the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County (TAAAC), the Association of Educational Leaders (AEL), the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Local 1693 (AFSCME), and the Secretaries and Assistants Association of Anne Arundel County (SAAAAC) during the development of this handbook. All four bargaining units were provided an opportunity to have input on its contents at various times from August 2020 to August 2021.

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Return to In-Person Learning

The return to in-person learning considers the health and safety of students and staff first. Here are some key factors about the in-person learning environment:

Ventilation in buildings include increased infusion of outside air, and regularly verified system performance of buildings in accordance with the safety recommendation of the County Health Officer.

Face coverings must be worn by anyone, **regardless of age and vaccination status**, inside of any AACPS building.

Employees and families are responsible for symptoms screening at home.

Classrooms will be organized to maximize space and promote at least 3 ft. distancing, to the extent possible, between students.

Individual school supplies will not be shared to the greatest extent possible.

The health and safety information in this guide is dynamic and will be updated as the Maryland Health Department and Anne Arundel County Department of Health make changes to their COVID-19 practices and protocols. The latest information will be available on our websites at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols or www.aacps.org/fall2021

Health and Safety

Guided by the recommendations of the Maryland Department of Health and the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, AACPS has developed a suite of safety and health protocols (on the following pages) to standardize proper procedures across school system facilities and for students and staff to follow. These guidelines are frequently updated in accordance with local, state, and federal guidance and are always accessible at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory and helps to keep everyone safe. Concerns regarding compliance to protocols may be addressed with school administrators, supervisors, or the AACPS Office of Investigations.

The protocols include:



Daily Screening Student Checklist

a handy reminder and chart to review symptoms and other factors before sending students to school each day. Parents are required to submit an acknowledgement form prior to the start of hybrid learning.



Face Coverings & Safety Practices

a detailed list of requirements for employees when in school system facilities, as well as other reminders and measures to help keep staff safe and areas clean



Daily Screening Employee Checklist

a resource for employees to use to assess their physical health. Employees are expected to evaluate their symptoms before coming to work each day and proceed accordingly.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Procedures

a summary of the measures in place for staff to use PPE during their duties



Welcoming Students Back: What Families Can Do

an overview of what families should do in preparation for in-person instruction



Cleaning Protocols

an outline of the daily steps taken to help prevent contamination and public spread of COVID-19



Tips for Staying Healthy: What Employees Can Do

a wellness overview for employees



Confirmed Case Guidance

an overview of what actions should be taken by families, staff, or supervisors if a school system facility is affected by a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19



Daily Screening Student Checklist

Please use the following checklist to monitor your student's health every day. If students exhibit any of these symptoms, they must not attend school until symptom free and advised by the county health department.

Review AACPS' suite of safety protocols at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols to be familiar with the steps taken by staff to keep students safe.

If your student has any ONE of the following symptoms, please do NOT send them to school. Additionally, please get them tested for COVID-19 or obtain an alternate diagnosis from a medical professional:

- ☐ temperature of 100.4°F or higher
- ☐ sore throat
- ☐ cough
- ☐ difficulty breathing
- ☐ diarrhea or vomiting
- ☐ new onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- ☐ new loss of taste or smell

For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from the baseline.

Notify your student's school.
www.aacps.org/schoollist
My student's school phone number is:

☐

Has my student been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19?

They must not come to school without advice from the Anne Arundel County Department of Health.

☐

Are my student's immunizations up to date?

☐

Did I pack materials that cannot be shared?

water, hand sanitizer, an extra cloth face covering, etc.

☐

Did I remind my student of proper hand washing and physical distancing?

☐

Does my student have a clean cloth face covering made of breathable material that fits snugly?

Unless they have an approved accommodation, students must wear a cloth face covering in accordance with applicable state and local mandates, except in limited circumstances. Face coverings must be worn at the bus stop and traveling on a bus to and from school.



Daily Screening Employee Checklist

Please use the following checklist to monitor your health every day. If you exhibit any of these symptoms, you must not report to your work location until symptom free and advised by the county health department.

Review AACPS' suite of safety protocols at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols to be familiar with the steps taken to keep staff safe.

☐

If you have any ONE of the following symptoms, do not come to work. Additionally, please get tested for COVID-19 or obtain an alternate diagnosis from a medical professional:

- ☐ temperature of 100.4°F or higher
- ☐ sore throat
- ☐ cough
- ☐ difficulty breathing
- ☐ diarrhea or vomiting
- ☐ new onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- ☐ new loss of taste or smell

For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from the baseline.



Employees must immediately notify their supervisor

if they or a person in their household has been exposed to an individual who is confirmed to have COVID-19.

Staff from such households must receive direction from their supervisor before reporting to work.

☐

Have I or anyone in my household been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19?

☐

Are my immunizations up to date?

☐

Did I pack proper materials for the workday?

water, hand sanitizer, an extra cloth face covering, etc.

☐

Do I have a clean cloth face covering made of breathable material that fits snugly?

Employees will be supplied with five reusable, cloth face coverings.



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Welcoming Students Back: What Families Can Do

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.



Health

- **Symptoms that should prompt staying at home are any ONE of the following:** fever of 100.4° or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea or vomiting, new onset of severe headache (especially with fever), or new loss of taste or smell. For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from the baseline.
If a student has any of these symptoms, they must not attend school and the school must be immediately notified. A healthy student checklist is available at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols. If a student develops or presents symptoms while at school, parents/guardians will be asked to promptly pick up their student.
- If a **student has been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, the child must not come to school without advice from the county Department of Health.**
- Make sure that **your child's immunizations are up to date.**
- **Consider flu shots** for your family.
- **Pack water, hand sanitizer, an extra cloth face covering, and other materials that cannot be shared.**
- **Remind your child of proper and frequent hand washing.**
- **Teach your child about appropriate distancing,** helping them to understand what maintaining a safe distance of space from others looks like.
- **Review AACPS' suite of safety protocols and facilities adjustments** to be familiar with the steps taken by staff to keep students safe.
- **Continue healthy habits** like eating a balanced diet, exercising, and getting plenty of sleep.



Face Coverings in School

- Unless they have an approved accommodation, all persons in school facilities must wear a cloth face covering in accordance with applicable state and local mandates, except when eating meals. Face coverings are recommended to be worn at the bus stop and are required to be worn on the bus.
- Choose face coverings with **breathable material that fit snugly**, but comfortably over the nose and mouth.
- **Neck gaiter and other similar products** are not acceptable as cloth face coverings.
- **Label your child's face covering.**
- Help your child understand that **wearing a face covering may also help prevent others from getting sick.**
- Show your child how to **carefully place and remove their face covering with clean hands.**
- Indoors, all students and staff – regardless of age or vaccination status – will be masked except in limited circumstances. More information can be found at www.aacps.org/fall2021.
- Face coverings must be **worn over the nose and mouth and securely around the face.**
- **Before putting on the face covering, hands should be clean** (soap and water or hand sanitizer)
- Face coverings **should not be worn while wet**, as doing so could make it more difficult to breathe.

Welcoming Students Back: What Families Can Do



Be Well – Mental Health

- ***Talk to your child about their feelings around going back to school.*** Help them to understand that their classrooms and interactions will be different. School staff will help them adjust by providing lessons and encouragement on new school procedures.
- ***Stay connected with your child's school.*** School staff value relationships, especially during times of uncertainty and unfamiliarity.
- ***Reach out to your child's school counselor*** or visit www.aacps.org/crisisresources for support.
- Review the Confirmed Case guidance protocol at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols to fully understand ***what happens if your child's school is affected by a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19.***
- ***Remember that you are not alone.*** AACPS is made up of many resilient and kind individuals who make a mighty awesome community.



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Tips for Staying Healthy: What Employees Can Do

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.



Stay Healthy

- **Symptoms that should prompt staying at home are any ONE of the following:** fever of 100.4° or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea or vomiting, new onset of severe headache (especially with fever), or new loss of taste or smell. For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from baseline.
- If you are sick, **seek medical care and avoid public places.**
- **If you or a member of your household has been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, do not come to work.** Stay home, except to seek medical care. Avoid public places.
- **Consider flu shots** for you and your family.
- When coming to work, **pack water, hand sanitizer, an extra cloth face covering, and other materials.**
- **Wear a face covering when not at home,** especially when appropriate distancing cannot occur.
 - Choose face coverings with **breathable material that fit snugly**, but comfortably over the nose and mouth.
 - **Before putting on the face covering, hands should be clean** (soap and water or hand sanitizer)
 - Face coverings should **not be worn while wet**, as doing so could make it difficult to breathe.
- **Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.**
- Become familiar with AACPS' suite of safety protocols at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols.
- **Continue healthy habits** like eating a balanced diet, exercising, managing stress, and getting plenty of sleep.



Be Well – Mental Health

- **Have regular family discussions to express feelings about the pandemic.** Address concerns among each other by researching issues and spending quality family time together.
- **Stay connected with your friends and colleagues.** Strong relationships are especially important during times of uncertainty and unfamiliarity.
- **Use the Employee Assistance Program for resources** to deal with workplace and everyday stress, as well as issues coping with COVID-19. www.aacps.org/eap.
- **Review the Confirmed Case Guidance protocol** at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols to fully understand what happens if a school, Central Office, or satellite office is affected by laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Remember that you are not alone. AACPS is made up of many resilient and kind individuals who make a mighty awesome community.



Face Coverings & Safety Practices

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.

CDC Recommendations for cloth face coverings in schools

- **Cloth face coverings have been proven to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.**
- Cloth face coverings **are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings** and when around people who live outside of their household.
- **Cloth face coverings must be worn by anyone over the age of 2** while in school buildings, except in limited circumstances, which may include:
 - Students engaging in strenuous exercise in a physical education course
 - Instrumental music students who are playing a wind instrument

More information can be found at www.aacps.org/fall2021.

Health & Safety Expectations in AACPS

The Code of Conduct will be followed for all students who do not comply with these guidelines. Failure of employees to comply with these guidelines will result in progressive discipline.



Anyone, regardless of age and vaccination status, are **required to be masked at any time inside of any AACPS building** *See limited exception note above.

- Must be worn over the nose and mouth and securely around the face.
- Before putting on the face covering, hands should be clean (soap and water or hand sanitizer).
- Face coverings should only be removed with clean hands.
- Face coverings should not be worn while wet, as doing so could make it difficult to breathe.



Basic personal **school supplies/office materials**, e.g., pens, paper, markers, tape, etc. **should not be shared**. Shared office items, e.g., copier, phones, microwave, etc. should be wiped frequently and individuals should always wash/sanitize hands after use.

Hand sanitizer and/or hand sanitizing stations **will be accessible** throughout all facilities.



Students and employees should not report to school/work if they are experiencing any ONE of the following: fever of 100.4° or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea or vomiting, new onset of severe headache (especially with fever), or new loss of taste or smell. **Students and employees with these symptoms should be tested for COVID-19 or obtain an alternate diagnosis from a medical professional.** For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from the baseline. Information regarding leave for individuals with COVID-19 or who are quarantined may be found at www.aacps.org/leave.

Face Coverings & Safety Practices

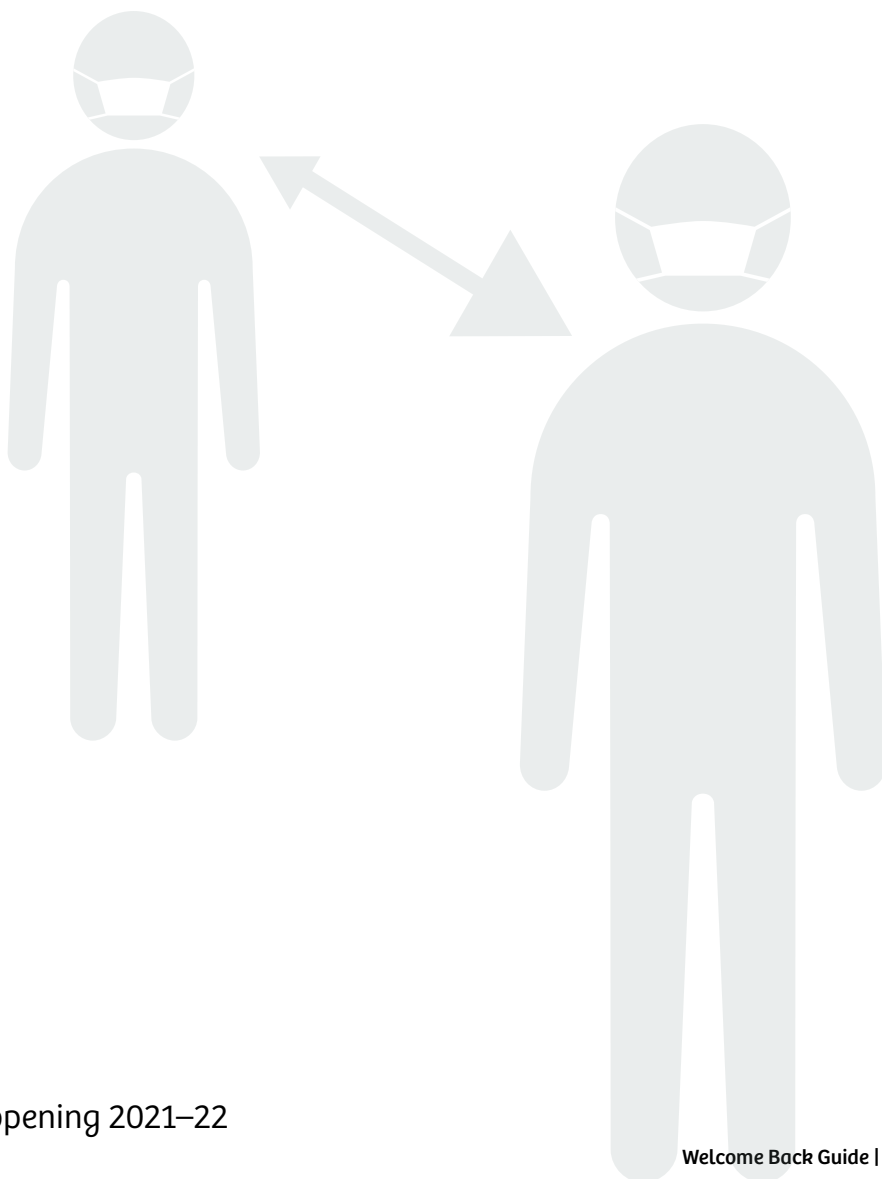
Additional Safety Reminders for Employees

AACPS supervisors and in-school administrators must **follow local and state guidelines** to promptly deal with **confirmed COVID-19 cases** (www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols) that directly affect the facilities for which they are responsible. Such response includes swift and confidential notifications to impacted individuals and affiliated parties as determined by the county Department of Health.



System-wide memos regarding operational and logistical decisions are posted on the AACPS Intranet for staff.

Employees are encouraged to use the Employee Assistance Program (www.aacps.org/eap) resources to help with everyday stress, as well as issues related to the pandemic.





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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Procedure for Employees

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.

Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in progressive discipline.



Face Coverings/Masks

- AACPS will provide **five washable, cloth, reusable face coverings** to each employee.
- **The CDC recommends face coverings in public** and when not around members of the same household to slow the spread of COVID-19.
- **Wearing at least a cloth face covering is mandated when indoors and essential to limiting the spread of COVID-19.** Face coverings other than medical-grade and cloth ones that fit snugly around the nose, close to cheeks, and under the chin, e.g., neck gaiters, are not permitted.
- Physical distancing measures, face shields, and other personal protections **may not be utilized in lieu of masks.**
- Masks with exhalation valves or vents allow respiratory droplets to escape and do not provide enough protection from the spread of COVID-19 to others. **The CDC does not recommend the use of masks with exhalation valves or vents.** Such masks should be used in combination with a cloth face covering.
- **All AACPS employees, contractors, and visitors in our Central and Satellite offices and our schools will be required to be masked at any time during which they are in the proximity of someone else regardless of age or vaccination status.**
- **More guidance for face coverings for employees** can be found at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols.



Face Shields

- AACPS will provide approved **face shields for employees based on health, work, or unique needs on a case-by-case basis.**
- A face shield is **primarily used for eye protection** for the person wearing it. The CDC does not currently recommend the use of face shields as a substitute for cloth face coverings or masks.
- Employees may wear face shields in addition to cloth face coverings.
- **Deaf/hard of hearing individuals or employees who work directly with deaf/hard of hearing individuals may opt to wear a hooded face shield** that wraps around the wearer's face and extends below the chin. AACPS will also provide this type of covering to students when required by an identified accommodation.
- Individuals who wear face shields should follow **CDC guidelines for face shield cleanliness.** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html

PPE Procedure for Employees



Acrylic Shields

- AACPS will purchase acrylic barriers to be installed by individual office/school staff for offices that have employees who come in frequent, direct contact with the public. Schools will have two acrylic shield stations per building which may require shifting tasks to alternate locations.
- Acrylic shields are designed as **protective barriers from airborne particles**.
- Acrylic shields may be **utilized by offices that have employees who have frequent, direct contact with the public**.
- Acrylic shields are **not replacements for required face coverings**. All employees who are in offices that have acrylic shields installed must also wear at least a cloth face covering.



Accommodations for Speciality Site In-Person Instruction and Services

- Developmental centers and other specialty site classes where employees will provide **close contact services to students** will identify needs and purchase PPE accordingly. Such needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. These employees may also complete the Specialized PPE Request Form to address additional needs.
- Hooded face covering options and gloves are available for employees and students who need them. This PPE will be provided prior to the delivery of educational service or in-person interactions at developmental centers..
- Advice on working with students who have difficulty wearing masks will be shared with employees and provided to parents, especially at developmental centers.



Purchasing Additional PPE

Schools and/or offices that would like to **purchase additional PPE** must contact the AACPS Budget Office at (410) 222-5150.



Cleaning Protocol

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.

Cleaning Products

- All disinfectants including the pre-moistened wipes and surface cleaners purchased and used by AACPS, are on the EPA “*Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19*” list. Note: Bleach is prohibited in public schools.
- All cleaning products are **used in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations** as listed on the product label and Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- In general, AACPS uses low-toxic, green-certified cleaning products and supplies in accordance with regulation DEE-RA – Green Product Cleaning Supplies for the everyday upkeep of buildings.
- In compliance with AACPS Hazard Communication Policy & Regulation, all cleaning products are **properly labeled and stored in a secure area** for use by authorized staff only.
- **AACPS employees can request sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer** from their supervisor.
- **Operations staff is trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals** used in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) Communication Standard.

Failure to comply with these steps will result in progressive discipline.

Cleaning Steps — Confirmed COVID-19 Case

- Upon notification that a person confirmed to have COVID-19 has been present in a school system building, the **affected area will be promptly closed and cleaned**. Principals, administrators, or supervisors will begin working closely with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to determine exposure risks for school system buildings.
- Buildings, specific rooms, and/or areas where the individual confirmed to have COVID-19 spent time will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. **Areas that require restricted access or supplemental cleaning will be identified.**
- The **cleaning scope of affected areas will be determined by Operations personnel** in consultation with County Department of Health officials. The results of the consultation will be documented on a standard form and signed by the applicable principal, administrator or supervisor to indicate completion of cleaning.

Cleaning Steps — Daily

- As trained professionals, **AACPS Operations staff provide routine cleaning and disinfecting services consistent with industry standards.**
- **Routine cleaning and disinfecting are important actions** to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- **Cleaning of high-traffic areas and frequently-touched surfaces will be performed as staffing allows.** Frequently-touched surfaces include, but are not limited to, tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, restrooms, toilets, faucets, sinks, soap and paper towel dispensers, school desks, etc.
- **Cleaning frequency is determined by volume of traffic or use.** Monitoring of areas and surfaces occurs throughout business hours.
- While cleaning and disinfecting common areas is the primary responsibility of the custodial staff, **personal workspace cleaning should be maintained by individual employees.** An employee may request disposable wipes from their supervisor to clean areas in their workspace such as their desk, telephone, keyboard, chair, and/or any other items they use in performing their duties.
- **Hand sanitizer and/or hand sanitizing stations will be accessible** throughout all facilities.



Confirmed COVID-19 Case Protocol Information for Families

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.

As defined by the Maryland Department of Health, COVID-19 symptoms are any ONE of the following:

**fever of 100.4° or higher
sore throat
cough**

**difficulty breathing
diarrhea or vomiting**

**new onset of severe headache
new loss of taste or smell**

For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from the baseline.

If your household is affected by a confirmed case of COVID-19

- If a person in a household has been exposed to someone who is confirmed to have COVID-19, **call the school nurse or school administration immediately.**
- **Students of such households must stay home or be promptly picked up from school.**

When a school is affected by a confirmed case of COVID-19

If a student or school staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19-like illness during the school day, the school will (as outlined by the Maryland Department of Health and the Maryland State Department of Education):

- **Isolate the student in a designated area.**
- **Assess** (by the school health staff) **for applicable symptoms** and confidentially notify the student's family.
- **Call the student's family to immediately pick up the child** for at least the remainder of the school day.
- **Provide further guidance** to the student's family from the county Department of Health, which may include

information regarding seeking medical care, quarantine duration, and COVID-19 testing.

- **Follow the established cleaning protocol**, especially where the student made physical contact. The cleaning protocol can be found at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols.

When a school is informed of a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in a student or school staff member, the AACPS Contact Tracing Team will work with the county Department of Health to conduct contact tracing to determine who has been in close contact with the involved individual.

- The **school will use state and local guidance documents**, such as "[Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps](#)" by the Maryland Department of Health, to determine the next course of action (quarantine, exclusion, etc.) for the individual.
- **The school will follow instructions from the county Department of Health** for all matters regarding quarantine, exclusion, and return to school for persons with a positive test for COVID-19 and those who had close contact. The AACPS Contact Tracing Team will direct the school regarding communication and next steps for those who had close contact.
- If the **number of laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 or persons with symptoms at a specific facility or area meets the definition of an outbreak**, the county Department of Health will make decisions on how to respond, including possible class quarantine or school closure.

Confirmed COVID-19 Case Protocol—Information for Families

Additional information from the Department of Health's Reopening Schools COVID-19 Health Guidelines for Anne Arundel County

"When there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 or COVID-19 like illness identified in school, that person's cohort will be assessed for quarantine. Isolation and quarantine will be managed by the Department of Health in partnership with AACPS.

A classroom or cohort outbreak is when there are two or more confirmed cases within that classroom or cohort, from different households, within 14 days.

A school-based outbreak is defined as (a) three or more classrooms or cohorts with outbreaks at the same school within a 14-day period, or (b) 5% or more of unrelated students and staff at a school with COVID-19 within a 14-day period.

Cases and outbreaks will be tracked to provide ongoing information about community spread, in-school spread, and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies in school. The Department of Health and AACPS will communicate directly with anyone requiring isolation and quarantine. AACPS will communicate with affected school communities while maintaining the health privacy of those directly affected."

About the AACPS Contact Tracing Team

The AACPS Contact Tracing Team is a group of education professionals that assists schools and satellite and central offices with the rapid and efficient collection of information regarding positive COVID-19 cases in school system buildings. The Team is responsible for:

- Coordinating with building administrators and supervisors regarding employees and students with positive COVID-19 cases
- Notifying the Anne Arundel County Department of Health of positive COVID-19 cases
- Providing guidance in consultation with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health regarding quarantining individuals who have been in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19
- Notifying employees who have deemed to be a close contact while in an AACPS school or building
- Managing COVID-19 positive case-related data

Communication of a confirmed case of COVID-19

- **Confidential communication** will occur between the involved family, health officials, and school administration.
- **Individuals will not be identified** in public notifications.
- **Notification will be provided as appropriate to the school community** regarding school processes that are affected.
- **AACPS officials, including the Executive Director of Human Resources and the Chief Communications Officer, and county health officials have a direct line of communication and collaboration** to ensure swift contact tracing and accurate information.
- **Cleaning protocols can always be reviewed at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols.**



Confirmed COVID-19 Case Protocol Information for Employees

AACPS follows the professional and expert recommendations of local and state health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make informed decisions regarding the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

Please note that public health data and information which informs such recommendations are subject to change. AACPS will make modifications in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements.

As defined by the Maryland Department of Health, COVID-19 symptoms are any ONE of the following:

**fever of 100.4° or higher
sore throat
cough**

**difficulty breathing
diarrhea or vomiting**

**new onset of severe headache
new loss of taste or smell**

For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from the baseline.

If your household is affected by a confirmed case of COVID-19

- **Employees must immediately notify their supervisor** if they or a person in their household has been exposed to an individual who is confirmed to have COVID-19.
- **Staff from such households will receive instruction from their supervisor** after advisement from the county health department.

When a school, central office, or satellite office is affected by a confirmed case of COVID-19

If an employee develops symptoms of COVID-19-like illness during the workday, supervisors or managers of a facility will (as outlined by the Maryland Department of Health and the Maryland State Department of Education):

- **Liase with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health** to assess symptoms.
- **Direct the employee to leave** for at least the remainder of the workday. If the employee is unable to leave immediately, they will be isolated to a designated area. (Information regarding leave for individuals with COVID-19 or who are quarantined may be found at www.aacps.org/leave.)
- Provide further guidance to the employee from the county Department of Health, which may include information regarding seeking medical care, quarantine duration, and COVID-19 testing.
- **Follow the established cleaning protocol**, especially where the employee made physical contact. The cleaning protocol can be found at www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols.

When a school or school system facility is informed of a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in a student or employee, the AACPS Contact Tracing Team and the school will work with the county health department to conduct contact tracing to determine who has been in close contact with the involved individual.

- **Supervisors will use state and local guidance documents**, such as "[Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps](#)" by the Maryland Department of Health, to determine the next course of action (quarantine, exclusion, etc.) for the individual.
- **Supervisors will follow instructions from the county health department** for all matters regarding quarantine, exclusion, and return to school for persons with a positive test for COVID-19. The AACPS Contact Tracing Team will direct the school regarding communication and next steps for those who had close contact.
- If the **number of laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 or persons with symptoms at a specific facility or area meets the definition of an outbreak**, the county health department will make decisions on how to respond.

Confirmed COVID-19 Case Protocol—Information for Employees

Additional information from the Department of Health's Reopening Schools COVID-19 Health Guidelines for Anne Arundel County

This information relates to school response; however, AACPS will apply the same criteria and effort to assess and handle cases and outbreaks at satellite and central offices.

"When there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 or COVID-19 like illness identified in school, that person's cohort will be assessed for quarantine. Isolation and quarantine will be managed by the Department of Health in partnership with AACPS.

A classroom or cohort outbreak is when there are two or more confirmed cases within that classroom or cohort, from different households, within 14 days.

A school-based outbreak is defined as (a) three or more classrooms or cohorts with outbreaks at the same school within a 14-day period, or (b) 5% or more of unrelated students and staff at a school with COVID-19 within a 14-day period.

Cases and outbreaks will be tracked to provide ongoing information about community spread, in-school spread, and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies in school. The Department of Health and AACPS will communicate directly with anyone requiring isolation and quarantine. AACPS will communicate with affected school communities while maintaining the health privacy of those directly affected."

About the AACPS Contact Tracing Team

The AACPS Contact Tracing Team is a group of education professionals that assists schools, satellite and central offices with the rapid and efficient collection of information regarding positive COVID-19 cases in school system buildings. The Team is responsible for:

- Coordinating with building administrators and supervisors regarding employees and students with positive COVID-19 cases
- Notifying the Anne Arundel County Department of Health of positive COVID-19 cases
- Providing guidance in consultation with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health regarding quarantining individuals who have been in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19
- Notify employees who have deemed to be a close contact while in an AACPS school or building
- Managing COVID-19 positive case-related data

Communication of a confirmed case of COVID-19

- ***Confidential communication will occur*** between the employee, supervisor, health officials, and human resources.
- ***Individuals will not be identified*** in public notifications.
- ***Notification will be provided*** as appropriate to the affected facility.
- ***AACPS officials, including the Executive Director of Human Resources and the Chief Communications Officer, and county health officials have a direct line of communication and collaboration*** to ensure swift contact tracing and accurate information.
- ***Cleaning protocols can always be reviewed at*** www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols.

Contact Tracing

When an AACPS school or office is made aware of a COVID-19 positive case involving a student or staff member, the AACPS Contact Tracing Team, working in collaboration with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, begins an investigation to determine those who were in proximity to the COVID-positive person during the exposure period (usually 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms or, in the case of an asymptomatic person, the date of the COVID-19 test). With some limited exceptions, those determined to have been within 6 feet of the COVID-positive person for 15 total (not consecutive) minutes over a 24-hour period are identified as “close contacts.” Depending on vaccination status and in accordance with federal, state, and county medical guidelines, those identified as close contacts may be required to quarantine for up to 10 days. For updated information on the contact tracing process, visit www.aacps.org/contacttracing.

Quarantining of Students and Staff

Anticipating the need for the potential quarantining of students or staff requires a plan for quarantined student learning engagement and quarantined staff teaching engagement, respectively. Students who are quarantined due to exposure of a close contact who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, yet are still healthy and not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, should continue to engage in school. Any healthy quarantined student will be assigned a virtual teacher of the day and given two specific meeting times along with a Google Meet code to log in virtually for attendance and academic support purposes. Students from across the district will be assigned a virtual teacher of the day by level. Pre-K–Grade 2 students will be assigned a primary virtual teacher while the grades 3-5 students will receive information to log in with an intermediate teacher. In a similar way, the middle and high school students will be assigned to either a middle or high school virtual teacher based on the grade level they are in currently.

All quarantined students will continue to have access to their Brightspace learning environment where they will find their assignments given by their grade level or discipline-based course teacher(s). Students should bring these assignments to their assigned virtual meetings with their virtual teacher to ask any questions they may have or seek support for anything they do not understand. Students will not receive synchronous teaching while quarantined, but they will have access to their assigned virtual teacher for office hours and academic support. All quarantined students who fully participate by logging into their Google Meet session with their assigned virtual teacher and submit their work via Brightspace in a timely way will be marked present for each school day for which they are under quarantine at home, away from in-person learning in the school setting. Details regarding the coding of absences for quarantined individuals can be found under the topic of Attendance and Grading in the AACPS Reopening Report on the Fall2021 reopening website. [www.aacps.org/fall2021]

Similarly, quarantined teachers who are sent home due to exposure to someone with COVID-19, will be expected to teach their classes virtually from home. A substitute teacher will be hired to monitor the classroom where the students are learning, but the teacher of record will be teaching the students virtually. Students will participate in the class via their Chromebooks. They will receive and submit their assignments via Brightspace. This will be a synchronous virtual teaching and learning format where all students will be present in the classroom and the teacher will be facilitating all learning virtually from home via their laptop computer.



Infrastructure

Cleaning and Disinfection

As established in the Cleaning Protocol, AACPS operations staff will apply routine and specialized cleaning and disinfecting methods to maintain sanitary facilities and prevent the public spread of COVID-19 this school year as they have done since the pandemic began in the Spring of 2020, including the following:

- Conducted thorough summer cleaning and returned stored furniture to classrooms
- Delivered (Logistics staff and our vendors) PPE such as masks, wipes, and hand sanitizer to schools

Ventilation

Facilities staff will continue to review and monitor the HVAC equipment and schedules to ensure the **ventilation systems operate properly and enhance circulation of conditioned outdoor** air to meet applicable local, state, and federal requirements. The Facilities Division will continue to follow and adhere to state health and safety mandates regarding proper ventilation, including the use of approved/recommended equipment and procedures, in all facilities.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Anne Arundel Health Officer, AACPS will continue to implement and maintain strategies that prioritize ventilation in buildings, support filtration with outside air, and regularly verify system performance in all buildings.

In full collaboration with the county health department, AACPS remains committed to taking all reasonable steps and following county health recommendations to provide a safe working environment for employees.

HVAC systems are designed and installed by HVAC industry professionals to meet the applicable building and occupancy code requirements at time of installation. All HVAC systems are routinely inspected and receive regular preventative maintenance by both AACPS employees and certified contractors to meet the applicable standards and to ensure that equipment remains operable in the manner that it was designed and intended to function.

All air filters are replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations to ensure the highest appropriate air filtration rates for each type of unit.

AACPS operates systems prior to and after occupancy to flush the building with outdoor air. Additionally all school system HVAC systems provide air flow into every space designed for occupancy by students and employees through a volumetric calculation. Each space has a volume (size of space) and the maximum number of anticipated people in the different spaces and the air flow rates take into account both factors.

Water Systems

To minimize the risk of Legionnaires disease and other diseases associated with water, maintenance staff will take steps to ensure that all water systems are available for use, especially after a prolonged facility shutdown. Water fountains should only be used to refill water bottles. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle from home daily; they will be able to refill it as needed throughout the school day.

Physical Barriers and Guides

Similar to the 2020–2021 school year, physical acrylic barriers will not be used in instructional areas but may be utilized in offices or areas with a high volume of public interaction and/or difficulty to manage physical distancing. Signage, stickers, and tape will be strategically positioned in our buildings to designate social distance, traffic patterns, and other health and safety expectations. Sample graphics of signage appears later in this guide.

Classroom Layouts

Classrooms will be organized to maximize space and promote at least 3 ft. distancing, to the extent possible, between students. Classrooms will be configured in traditional fashions to accommodate the number of students enrolled for that class. When possible, additional furniture will be removed from classrooms, meeting rooms, and other areas to allow for physical social distancing and safe traffic flow.

Shared Objects

During the 2020-21 school year, AACPS discouraged the use of shared materials (e.g., electronic devices, toys, books, learning aids) in classrooms by providing enough materials for each student and/or avoiding activities that would promote such sharing. Student items at schools were labeled and stored individually and separately. As the new school year begins, Anne Arundel County Department of Health has informed us that we can begin the sharing of learning manipulatives and play toys as long as students wash or sanitize their hands before and after the use of shared objects. Additionally, the shared items must be cleansed according to cleaning protocols at the end of each school day.

Communal Spaces

Large spaces such as the cafeterias, libraries, and gymnasiums will be used for their traditional purposes, eating, learning, and playing/exercising, respectively. Playground use will be open for students to play freely, socially distanced to the extent possible. Bathroom use will be staggered so that physical distancing can be maintained. Students will be expected to wear face coverings in classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, while arriving/departing school, and on school buses. Masks may be removed when eating, drinking, and learning or playing outside.

Security & Building Access

AACPS will continue to implement plans that balance the health needs to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and the security measures that keep students and staff safe on a regular basis. These plans include traditional ingress and egress access as well as providing multiple points of entry to allow for physical distancing. Minimizing congested traffic flow is one of the many considerations that will support current safety and security measures for buildings. Movement procedures, including hallway traffic patterns and class rotations will continue to be evaluated to uphold proper health and safety expectations.

Employees, visitors and contractors are required to wear face coverings at all times in all AACPS buildings. Visitors to schools and Central Office will be required to go through the usual identification-check process, but access to buildings or parts of buildings may be limited based on the health protocols in effect at any given time. Virtual meetings will be encouraged to mitigate health and security concerns.

Food and Nutrition Services

School Meals Program

AACPS Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) staff will continue to safely provide a program that meets student needs. Staff will wear face coverings and gloves during preparation and serving of meals, as well as anytime they are in a school and/or cannot maintain physical distancing. In accordance with traditional procedure, Food and Nutrition Services staff will monitor meal offerings with considerations for student food allergies. School meals will be served in school cafeterias in the traditional fashion. Some schools will have meal kiosks in operation throughout the school building.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Meal preparation areas will be properly cleaned, disinfected, and sanitized per usual methods and protocols performed by Food and Nutrition and Operations staff and in accordance with Anne Arundel County Department of Health Safety and Sanitation Standards.

Transportation

AACPS transportation specialists and bus operators are committed to the safe transport of students every day. In collaboration with bus contractors, AACPS offers bus driver training throughout the calendar year. Regular and routine inspection of buses and the cleaning and disinfection of buses will follow all MSDE protocols and procedures. Department of Transportation will train contractors and bus drivers to follow the approved cleaning and disinfection protocols.

Traditional bus service will be available to all students during the 2021–2022 school year [Student Bus Stop Information: www.aacps.org/buses]. All bus personnel and students riding buses will be required to wear face coverings at all times, per federal, state, and local guidelines and regulations. Families will be expected to sign the Student Transportation Acknowledgement form, which can be found as part of this guide and online at www.aacps.org/fall2021.

Technology

Before the end of the first semester of the 2020–2021 school year, 83,044 Chromebooks were made available to students, creating a 1:1 device ratio for students to fully participate in virtual instruction.

As AACPS returns to in-person instruction for the 2021–2022 school year, students will use Chromebooks as a component of a robust, multi-dimensional learning environment that incorporates, but does not depend on, technology. The Chromebooks for Every Student initiative does, however, provide the proper resources to afford the flexibility to conveniently and seamlessly shift teaching and learning models, as deemed appropriate by the teacher or as needed by the students.

Students are expected to bring their Chromebooks to school every day and to properly care for them. More information on how to care for Chromebooks can be found later in this guide or online at www.aacps.org/fall2021.



Student Transportation COVID-19 Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Risk

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) transportation of students to and from school during the 2021-2022 school year will continue to adhere to the following conditions which must be met by the bus operators, drivers and attendants, and eligible students whose families choose to utilize transportation services.

Bus operators will be responsible for the following conditions:

- Interior surfaces that students will be in contact with on the bus will be disinfected with an approved disinfecting agent prior to transporting students each morning and afternoon.
- Drivers and attendants will be responsible for completing a daily personal screening of COVID-19 like symptoms (in alignment with Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene guidelines) prior to boarding the bus and wearing masks at all times while on the bus with students.

Parents/Guardians and students will be responsible for maintaining the following as a condition for utilizing the transportation services:

- All students must be screened for COVID-19 like symptoms daily. Parents/guardians should check for the following before their child attends school or camp each day. Keep your student home and notify the school if they have any ONE of the following symptoms:
 - Fever of 100.4° degrees or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea or vomiting, new onset of severe headache (especially with fever), or new loss of taste or smell. For persons with chronic conditions such as asthma, the symptoms should represent a change from baseline.
- All students must properly wear a face mask/covering the entire time they are on the bus unless they have an AACPS approved mask accommodation. Students will not be permitted to ride the bus if they are not wearing a face covering.
- No eating or drinking will be allowed while on the bus.
- Once seated on the bus, all students must stay in their seats until directed to exit the bus by the bus driver or aide.

I understand and acknowledge that COVID-19 is a public health risk, and that AACPS cannot guarantee my child's safety or immunity from infection. At present, there is no approved vaccination for COVID-19 for children under the age of 12. With full appreciation of these facts, I agree to allow my child(ren) to utilize AACPS transportation services.

I understand that guidance from the CDC, state or local health authorities, and AACPS may change, and I will be required to adhere to those changes. I understand that my child and I are responsible for following all COVID-19 related health and safety protocols in effect, such as, completing a daily wellness screening and the appropriate use of face coverings, as established by this Acknowledgement.

I further acknowledge and agree that I will not put my child(ren) on the bus if they are presenting with COVID-19 like symptoms. I will also promptly notify my child's Principal if my child exhibits any of the symptoms listed above.

Student Transportation
COVID-19 Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Risk
Page 2

By my signature below, I certify that I have read and fully understand this COVID-19 Acknowledgement and fully understand its terms. I am signing this acknowledgement freely and voluntarily with full knowledge of its significance.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Print Name

Date

Student Name

Student ID number (SIF)

Grade

School

AACPS | Taking Care Of Your Chromebook

Students and parents/guardians are responsible for the general care of the device they have been issued. Anne Arundel County Public Schools has issued Chromebooks in order to support access to virtual learning. When a Chromebook becomes damaged, that learning is interrupted,

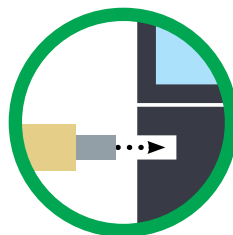
so please take care of your Chromebook as you would take care of your gaming station or cell phone. For resources and help using your Chromebook, please visit AACPS Virtual Learning Information www.aacps.org/virtuallearning.



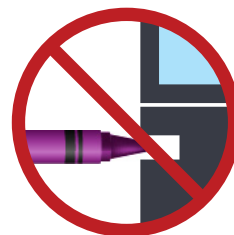
Protect your password.
Do not share your password or account information.



Keep all food and drinks away from your device.



Be careful when inserting and removing cords, cables, and external devices.



Do not place foreign objects into your Chromebook.

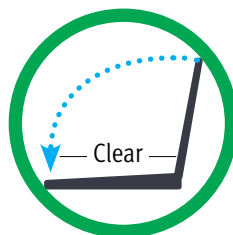
Transporting your Chromebook

Always carry and transport your Chromebook with care.

The screen is delicate and can crack easily. Always be sure the lid is completely closed and secured before moving your Chromebook.



Never move a device by lifting from the screen.



Be certain all objects are out of the way before closing the screen.



Be careful when carrying the device in a case or backpack. Notebooks, books, writing utensils, earbuds, etc. may put too much pressure and weight on the Chromebook screen. Small items may slip between the screen and keyboard.

Screen Care

Your Chromebook screen can easily be damaged! Excessive pressure can break the screen.



In Case of a Spill

If a liquid spills into the Chromebook, **unplug it immediately.** Do not plug back in until it is thoroughly dry.

If your Chromebook is not working, contact your school or email ChromebookIssues@aacps.org.



Do not lean or place anything on the top of the device that could put pressure on the screen.



Do not store the device with the screen in the open position.



Do not poke the screen with anything that will mark or scratch the screen surface. Only use your clean finger.



Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pens, pencils, etc.).



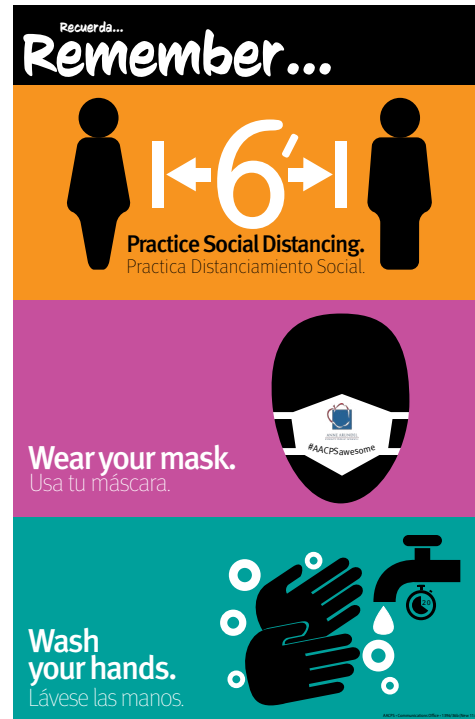
Do not use any liquid to clean the screen—use a soft dry microfiber cloth or anti-static cloth.

Safety Posters

This signage can be found posted around school buildings.



Elementary



Secondary



Offices/Staff Areas



Staying Informed—Communication

Resources at your fingertips

Visit www.aacps.org/fall2021 for the latest updates, FAQs, and resources to help navigate the 2021–2022 school year. Visit the Family Information Line website at www.aacps.org/FamilyInformationLine or call **410-222-5001** with any questions you have regarding our Fall 2021 reopening. Information is available in English and Spanish.

Follow **AACPS @AACountySchools on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram** and don't forget to download the school system app! Also, be sure to subscribe to the **AACPS YouTube Channel** at www.aacps.org/YouTube.

Video Outreach

Reopening Reports

Every Wednesday in August through to the beginning of the school year, Superintendent George Arlotto delivers video updates on the reopening of schools. They are archived for your access at www.aacps.org/reopeningreports.

Automated Avenues

As always, families and staff can receive the latest news via phone, email, text, push notification, and social media via the automated contact system. Please make sure that important contact information is up to date by contacting your student's school.

Quick Links

www.aacps.org/fall2021

www.aacps.org/FamilyInformationLine

www.aacps.org/safetyprotocols

www.aacps.org/chromebooks

www.aacps.org/crisisresources

www.aacps.org/BrightspaceForFamilies

www.aacps.org/eap

www.aacps.org/contacttracing

www.aacps.org/leave



ANNE ARUNDEL
COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Anne Arundel County Public Schools
George Arlotto, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools